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ABSTRACT

Surging demand for workers, growing income inequality, and passage of welfare reforms have made work force development one of the United States' key national concerns. Public/Private Ventures has been working with various states to design work force development strategies that seek to address the concerns of many work force development specialists who believe that, on its own, the "work first" approach to work force development is unlikely to further reduce individuals' reliance on public assistance and to solve businesses' problem of finding enough qualified workers. The strategies, which have been deemed the State Workforce Policy Initiative, focus on the following key program elements: enabling workers to gain the skills needed to support themselves and their families; engaging employers in designing and implementing programs; and developing effective ways to provide employment retention assistance to workers as they move from welfare into the labor force. (Approximately two-thirds of this document is devoted to profiles of efforts to implement the initiative in Colorado, Florida, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Washington. Each profile contains the following components: an overview of the state's economic and labor market context; a description of efforts to implement the initiative; and implications of the state's efforts.) (MN)

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# STATE WORKFORCE POLICY INITIATIVE

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# OVERVIEW

Strong economic growth has created millions of jobs during the 1990s and driven unemployment to its lowest level in a quarter of a century. Lofty stock prices, rising real estate values and record labor force participation levels are indeed good news for many. But these economic gains have been accompanied by growing income inequality among American families.

Income inequality is on the rise, just as the public sector's willingness to address it through redistributive policies is waning. The public's strong skepticism about the efficacy of such programs, combined with long-term budget constraints, make it unlikely that healthy, unemployed adults will receive much in the way of income support—unless it is tied directly to work. In order to make ends meet, workers will have to depend more than ever on their ability to command decent wages in the private labor market.

Employers are concerned as well, but for different reasons. Tight labor markets across the country have provided an opportunity for low-skill workers to enter employment in record numbers. Unemployment has dropped so low in many parts of the country that employers are having a difficult time finding qualified workers. Business owners are not only concerned about finding new workers; they also see serious attitudinal and skill deficiencies among their current workers.[1]

### Workforce Development

Surging demand for workers and growing income inequality should make workforce development one of our key national concerns. The passage of welfare reform in the form of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act, now known by its principal program, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), has made the need for a sound workforce development system even more pressing: the strict work requirements and time limits that are part of the act are pushing more families into the job market.

The principles of TANF, with its strong emphasis on rapid attachment to the labor force, or "work first," now dominate not just welfare-to-work programs; they are the driving force in workforce development in general. State and local workforce development policymakers and program operators are rapidly reconfiguring their programs to complement their welfare-to-work strategies.[2] The most significant consequence of this movement is a shift away from training and education to a focus on immediate job search and placement. The principal goal of both welfare reform and workforce development is now employment, with little concern about the quality of the jobs or the prospects for advancement.

There is much to be said for work first as a principle of workforce development. Certainly, aided by a strong economy, it has helped to reduce dramatically the number of welfare caseloads, leading to declines of over 50 percent in some states. Many workforce practitioners also favor early entry into employment, particularly for people who have not done well in school.[3]

But, in our view, work first alone is unlikely to address two key workforce policy goals: enabling businesses to find qualified workers and enabling workers to earn enough to support their families. There are two major reasons for this pessimistic outlook. First, disadvantaged workers moving into the labor market typically have poor job retention. Young people, women on welfare, and other unskilled workers tend to get and lose jobs rapidly, leading to years of "churning" through a series of entry-level jobs. For example, only 25 percent of women who voluntarily leave welfare for work hold the same job for as long as 18 months.[4] Several factors

TABLE 1: EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION (1993)

| CHARACTERISTICS | HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT | HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE | SOME COLLEGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Income | $9,733 | $16,185 | $22,531 |
| Weeks worked | 29.3 | 38.8 | 42.4 |
| Weeks unemployed | 4.39 | 2.81 | 1.91 |

Source: National Longitudinal Surveys, Youth Cohort.[6]

contribute to churning, such as the high cost of working,[5] personal health and family problems, and failure to meet employers' needs.

Low skills are the second major barrier workers face in their efforts to move up. Economic changes have increased the importance of strong workplace skills for all workers. Low-skill workers tend to earn lower wages, have less job security and experience longer periods of unemployment than do skilled workers, as documented in Table 1. Moreover, these differences between skilled and unskilled workers have been widening for the past 25 years.

Few data are available at this stage on the earnings of households that have moved from welfare to work under TANF. One of the few sources of good information comes from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, which tracked the employment outcomes of all single parents in Milwaukee County who were on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in December 1995 and who were expected to work under Wisconsin's "W-2" program. Of the 25,125 AFDC recipients expected to work, 72 percent (18,126) were employed at some point in the 15 months beginning with January 1996. But employment retention was a significant concern, particularly for new entrants to the labor force. Among single parents who entered employment in the first quarter of 1996, half were no longer employed or were only marginally employed one year later. Earning enough to escape poverty was even harder—only one in 16 of the December 1995 recipients had earnings high enough to escape poverty by early 1997.[7]

In one of the few longitudinal studies of the employment and earnings of former welfare recipients, Meyer and Cancian found that while most women who voluntarily left welfare worked, few earned wages high enough to escape poverty.[8] Over five years after exiting welfare, approximately 60 percent of the women worked in any given year. Median earnings among those who worked rose steadily over the five years, from $5,509 in the first year to $8,961 in the fifth year, but generally remained too low to lift their families out of poverty. Meyer and Cancian's research documents the critical importance of skills in explaining the earnings trajectory of former welfare recipients. Nearly 60 percent of women who exited welfare without a high school degree remained poor, while only 4 percent of those with education beyond high school remained poor. Presumably, women who leave welfare only after being pushed by time limits and work requirements will fare even worse.

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### The Workforce Policy Initiative

Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) has been working with a group of states to design workforce development strategies that seek to address these concerns, recognizing that work first is here to stay. (See program descriptions for summaries of each state's program.) The initiative's principal goal is to enable participants to earn enough to move out of poverty. It seeks to achieve this by focusing on three key program elements:

- Enabling workers to gain the skills needed to earn enough to support themselves and their families;
- Engaging employers in the design and implementation of programs; and
- Developing effective ways to provide employment retention assistance to workers as they move into the labor force.

The programs are deliberately small in scale, which is important for a number of reasons. First, in a small program, the penalties of failure are much smaller, which enables policymakers and program operators to take more risks than they could in a statewide initiative. Second, the Workforce Policy Initiative has been designed to enable participating states to learn about what works and what does not work before they embark on more ambitious efforts. The workforce field is littered with major efforts that failed precisely because they were implemented too quickly. In this initiative, we felt that it was critical to give states plenty of room to try new strategies, make mistakes and adapt their strategies accordingly.

One of the central elements of the initiative is to balance the needs of employers and participants. Several of the states are attempting to understand and meet employers' needs by developing strategies that focus on specific sectors of a local or regional economy. Sectoral employment programs have demonstrated that it is possible to prepare and place people in high-demand occupations—positions for which they normally would have had little or no opportunity to compete. The same economic trends that have opened the doors for poor people to entry-level jobs in growing industries can also aid their movement to positions that pay family-sustaining wages. By developing sectoral employment approaches that help employers build a more skilled workforce and enable workers to stay employed and move up, participating states are attempting to develop new approaches that will have long-term support from both business leaders and workers.

Employment retention and ongoing skills upgrading are two other key elements of the initiative. As noted above, inexperienced workers often face a difficult transition to steady employment. In the past, employment programs have focused principally on preemployment training and have paid little attention to people after they are placed in a job. Because retention is so low, these programs quickly develop poor reputations with employers and do little to help workers over the long term.

Similarly, few employment programs for disadvantaged workers have focused on skills acquisition after people are employed. This orientation needs to change for several reasons. First, many workers want and need to work right away—they cannot afford to spend several weeks or months in training and often are not sure what they want to do. Second, available evidence indicates that employers devote only modest amounts of their own resources to training entry-level workers. Finally, the work first approach that now dominates welfare and workforce development strategies precludes serious skill development prior to employment.

The states in the Workforce Development Initiative all accept the principle of work first and plan to place people in jobs quickly or begin working with them after they are employed. Unlike most rapid-

attachment programs, however, the strategies of these states will include continuing to work with people for the long term; their goals will be to help them stay employed and to gain the additional education and skills needed to move up. These strategies break new ground for the participating states, which have little practical experience with programs that work with low-skill workers after they are employed. In the past, employment signaled the end of participants' relationship with a program. Now it represents just the beginning. Consequently, the states and their local partners—community colleges and nonprofit organizations—have much to learn about how to design and implement postemployment strategies that focus on job retention and skills upgrading.

Over the next three years, P/PV will work with these states as they implement their strategies. We will help them assess their own performance and refine their programs as appropriate. We will share information about the initiative through regular reports and updates in an effort to help other policymakers and practitioners who are seeking to implement similar strategies. Brief summaries of each state's strategy are included with this overview. For further information, please contact P/PV or the individuals listed for each of the states.

## NOTES

1 National Association of Manufacturers (1997). *The Skilled Workforce Shortage.* Washington, D.C.: National Association of Manufacturers.

2 Elliott, Mark, Don Spangler and Kathy Yorkievitz (1998). *What's Next After Work First.* Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.

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5 Edin, Kathryn and Laura Lein (1997). *Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

6 Sum, Andrew et al. (1997). *A Generation of Challenge: Pathways to Success for Urban Youth: A Policy Study of the Levitan Youth Policy Network.* Baltimore: Institute for Policy Studies, The Johns Hopkins University.

7 Pawasarat, John. *Employment and Earnings of Milwaukee County Single Parent AFDC Families: Establishing Benchmarks for Measuring Employment Outcomes Under "W-2."*

8 Meyer, Daniel and Maria Cancian (1996). *Life After Welfare: The Economic Well-Being of Women and Children Following an Exit from AFDC.* Madison: The University of Wisconsin.

# COLORADO

## THE ECONOMIC AND LABOR MARKET CONTEXT

Colorado's economy is healthy and growing, fueled by a diverse economic base. Colorado has the second highest concentration of certain sectors of workers in high-technology occupations in the nation, with a total payroll of $6.2 billion, up almost 50 percent in the last five years. Metropolitan Denver, home to more than one-half of the state's population and most of its major employers, is at the center of this economic expansion.

Yet Colorado's economic well-being is challenged by a significant shortage of skilled workers. Industry studies estimate that there are three jobs for every available skilled worker, and fewer than one-third of technology-sector jobs are filled on time. At the same time, Colorado wants to move thousands of low-income, inexperienced workers into jobs that yield family-sustaining wages.

## THE INITIATIVE: TRANSFORMATIONS

As part of its effort to align the needs of the high-tech industry with those of the unemployed and underemployed, the Colorado Community College Occupational and Education System and the Colorado Workforce Coordinating Council have established Transformations, an intensive 14-week program of applied mathematics, physics and communications. Transformations is housed in Denver at the Higher Education Advanced Technology (HEAT) Center, a unique collaboration of several of the state's community colleges and four-year universities, which was established to concentrate training in a variety of high-tech-related fields on the grounds of the former Lowry Air Force Base.

**Participants:**

Colorado will take advantage of the opportunities presented by its economic strength to introduce low-skilled workers, particularly women, to technical employment and educational opportunities leading to family-sustaining wages. Participants include low-income individuals with limited work history and technical knowledge.

**Sectors:**

The initiative will target technologies associated with high growth sectors, e.g., manufacturing, information technology, biotechnology and telecommunications. Key area employers from these industries will participate directly in the initiative, taking responsibility for overseeing the technical curriculum, focusing training on such areas of concern as quality assurance, and assisting in the placement of program graduates.

Services:

Participants will attend class seven hours a day, Monday through Friday. Students will be connected to mentors while they are in training and will also have the benefit of an employer-mentor once they are placed. Postemployment support services, such as counseling and career planning, will be provided. Colorado is also developing ways to help participants access other training opportunities.

The program's location at the HEAT Center provides students with opportunities to observe how Transformations can lead to other educational opportunities. These opportunities can be realized through agreements now in place among several HEAT Center educational institutions and several participating employers who will pay tuition expenses for employees seeking to upgrade their skills.

## IMPLICATIONS

All the state's workforce development partners were involved in designing the program: the Workforce Coordinating Council and the Departments of Labor, Employment and Human Services. The council's Training and Lifelong Learning subcommittee, which will be involved in oversight, is responsible for devising strategies to prepare the workforce for current needs; therefore, it is expected to gain from Transformations' valuable insights into effective strategies for use statewide. The subcommittee will look to Transformations as a model for working adults who elect to continue training for the high-skill, high-wage jobs available in Colorado.

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# FLORIDA

## The Economic and Labor Market Context

The economy is in flux in Miami. Employment opportunities in traditional industries are declining while emerging industries are adding thousands of new jobs annually. Despite the overall instability of the economy, Miami has the largest medical community in Florida, with more than 34,000 health care workers, 25 hospitals and a rapidly growing biomedical industry. The retail and service industries have become more internationally focused, and together, these sectors generated more than 19,000 jobs in 1997. Nonetheless, poverty in the area remains high. As of February 1998, Miami-Dade County had the largest concentration of welfare recipients of any county in Florida. Furthermore, many of these individuals had not been employed in the last three years and more than a third had no prior work experience. The regional job market clearly offers distinct opportunities to connect low-income, inexperienced workers to entry-level work to begin the journey toward self-sufficiency.

## The Initiative: Families in Touch

Florida's Families in Touch initiative will be located in Miami-Dade County under the auspices of the Human Services Coalition. An array of job retention and advancement services will be offered to entry-level employees in the retail and health care industries through weekly support groups. Florida State University will help manage and evaluate the effort. Other key partners are the Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency (WAGES) Board, Florida's welfare-to-work program; the League of Women Voters; the Miami-Dade public schools; and retail and health care industry associations.

**Participants:**

The Families in Touch initiative will target newly hired, racially diverse individuals in Miami-Dade County who are either still receiving TANF or who have left the welfare rolls within the past six months and are still eligible for transitional assistance. Individuals will be employed in jobs in the retail or health care industries.

**Sectors:**

Florida is focusing on jobs in retail and health care because they are two of the fastest growing industries in the state. Twenty percent of Florida workers are employed in the retail sector, making it the state's second largest industry group. And with Florida's rapidly growing population, including increasing numbers of both senior citizens and young children, health care is steadily increasing its numbers and its percentage share of Florida's workforce.

The Florida Retail Association and the Florida Health Care Association fully support the initiative and will play active roles in three key areas: developing materials for industry-based skills training, helping participants to gain knowledge needed for career advancement in these industries, and helping to build relationships with local employers.

**Services:**

Ten Families in Touch (FIT) teams, each with 10 participants and a team facilitator, will meet weekly for two hours over a 12-month period for personal development and support counseling; civic education; career education and career advancement; and other related activities designed to improve life skills and self-confidence, civic awareness, career aspirations and industry-related skills.

Once participants agree to join a FIT team, they will sign a contract committing themselves to participate for one year, attend meetings and agree to follow-up contact for two years after their participation ends. A community-based mentoring organization will be responsible for meeting the overall support needs of each team, as well as those of individual participants. The mentoring agency will also assist the project staff with participant recruitment.

A critical element of the initiative is the development of curricula and other materials that can be used to help other organizations provide postplacement services. The materials will include training guidance and operating procedures for FIT team facilitators, a participant policy manual and a program orientation package. These materials will be prepared in different languages and adjusted to reflect varying cultural norms.

## IMPLICATIONS

Florida's initiative has the potential to inform state welfare policy through Florida's WAGES Board, its principal sponsor. WAGES is implemented by 24 local/regional coalitions with the authority and resources to design and deliver local services that promote employment. The Human Services Coalition of Dade County will implement Families in Touch over the next two years. If successful, the WAGES Board expects the initiative to influence future practices of local WAGES coalitions throughout the state.


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# OKLAHOMA

## THE ECONOMIC AND LABOR MARKET CONTEXT

Tulsa has undergone significant economic change over the past two decades. Once considered "the oil capital of the world," Tulsa saw its economy suffer during the recession of the 1980s and the global collapse in oil prices. Today, however, with an unemployment rate hovering around 3 percent, the Tulsa metropolitan area is in the midst of a strong economic recovery that state analysts expect to continue into the foreseeable future.

According to the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, the region has already added more than 14,000 new jobs in 1998. Employment growth is strongest in the service, transportation, communication and manufacturing industries, with most entry-level jobs paying $6 to $8 per hour. Indeed, Tulsa's overall economy appears to be characterized by lower-wage employment, with an estimated 50,000 workers presently looking for better-paying jobs that also offer the potential for career advancement.

## THE INITIATIVE: INDEX

Oklahoma's initiative involves the expansion of IndEx, an employer-driven workforce development strategy designed to promote both welfare reform and economic development in the Tulsa area. IndEx works hand in hand with businesses, state and local government agencies, educational institutions and community-based organizations, and has been endorsed by the Governor and legislative leaders as "one of the leading private sector-led workforce development systems in the country."

**Participants:**

The Oklahoma initiative will serve disadvantaged adults, including welfare recipients, residents of subsidized housing, and incumbent workers eager to advance. Most of the individuals in the target group face multiple barriers for advancement, including the lack of basic skills, no high school diploma or GED and limited work experience.

**Sectors:**

IndEx will focus its initiative on the manufacturing and telecommunications industries, two sectors that have experienced sustained higher-wage job growth over the last several years and in which skilled workers are in great demand.

Manufacturing firms have added over 9,700 jobs since 1990 and continue to be one of the Tulsa area's primary growth industries. Beginning in 1992, the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce helped to provide needed entry-level employees, particularly in such high-demand areas as assembly workers and crew supervisors, through IndEx.

The telecommunications industry is also experiencing rapid growth in Tulsa. In fact, two of the five national fiber-optic network companies are now located in the metropolitan area. These employers believe that Tulsa has an appealing business environment: ample tax incentives, a critical mass of technology-oriented companies and training programs that prepare workers for these growing industries.

**Services:**

IndEx contracts with local companies to perform light manufacturing and product assembly in the IndEx facility, which also includes classroom space and a computer lab. Participants are enrolled for six months and attend 40 hours per week. Their eight-hour day is divided evenly between performing work on the shop floor and honing their educational skills through a variety of activities that include workplace safety, reliability, and maintaining a positive attitude. IndEx is expanding by providing training in computer technology to prepare workers for the telecommunications industry.

As clients progress through the program, they are placed in jobs at participating firms for up to 90-day trial employment. During this period, public and community-based organizations collaborate with IndEx to provide support, including necessary referrals to such services as child care, housing, clothing distribution and transportation. IndEx clients maintain eligibility for TANF, child-care assistance, Medicaid and food stamps while in the program.

The Oklahoma initiative will also expand postemployment support services and skills-upgrading opportunities for participants. Staff will extend the time period for counseling to improve IndEx graduates' job retention, and to help them identify and access additional training and education. IndEx plans to add a welding component to help participants employed in manufacturing earn certification through local postsecondary institutions. Participants will also attend classes designed to help them deal with problems on the job; develop needed work skills; and address individual career advancement issues, such as managing conflict, being professional, managing time and taking college courses.

## IMPLICATIONS

By strengthening its postemployment services and adding skills-upgrading activities, IndEx will be well-positioned to engage the telecommunication industry, as it has manufacturing, and offer a host of job opportunities that pay a living wage to low-income residents of Tulsa. The governor of Oklahoma, a strong supporter of the IndEx model, is also in favor of replicating IndEx with other chambers of commerce and industries throughout the state.


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# OREGON

## The Economic and Labor Market Context

Oregon's economy has undergone dramatic change over the last 15 years. Employment fell sharply in the 1980s as the natural resources-based economy declined and manufacturing slowed, only to rebound in the early 1990s because of a strengthening national economy and the growth of a more diverse economic base. Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties, which surround Salem (the state capital), are now experiencing an economic revival after years of economic stagnation and decline. Driven by an increasing number of thriving small businesses, and by the steady presence of state and local government offices, the three-county area's economic prospects appear bright. Yet both of these economic sectors, as different as they are from one another, depend directly on their ability to hire and maintain a skilled workforce.

## The Initiative: Up with Wages

In partnership with the Chemeketa Community College, Oregon's Regional Office of Adult and Family Services (AFS), the state agency that offers cash assistance, food stamps, and medical and employment-related services to those in need, is launching Up With Wages to boost the income levels of the working poor and to increase the supply of skilled workers to area employers. Because of the preponderance of small businesses in the three-county region, AFS intends to meet their need for skilled employees by adding training and career development services to an already strong arsenal of support services aimed at alleviating poverty in Oregon. The initiative will also support AFS's goal to help those who are employed succeed and advance in their jobs; it will include redefining the role of case managers and involvement of workforce partners as they take on new responsibilities as business consultants, coaches and mentors to support entry-level workers who are placed in jobs.

**Participants:**

Oregon's initiative targets two groups of working poor people: entry-level state employees, many of whom are single parents, and underemployed private-sector workers in industries thought to have little career potential. Many participants are former welfare clients who have been placed in jobs by AFS; others are entry-level workers who have found jobs on their own. In either case, participants need additional skills and other assistance to advance.

**Sectors:**

Oregon will focus on entry-level state clerical workers earning under $10 an hour, and on private-sector employees in the manufacturing and retail industries who are earning $6 to $8 an hour. Oregon's initiative aims to help inexperienced workers use entry-level jobs as stepping stones for advancement within the industry or to other higher paying occupations.

**Services:**

Participants will receive services needed to keep entry-level jobs and advance in occupations with opportunities for promotion. Most of the 925 participants each year will receive occasional services, as needed, and 125 to 150 a year will receive more intensive services and career planning.

Specifically, AFS intensive services will incorporate an individualized income improvement plan for all participants that could include:

- weekly job coaching and on-the-job training,
- assistance with personal problems,
- regular counseling and follow-up,
- customized occupational training,
- special seminars to improve such work skills as communication on the job and team building,
- referrals and financial assistance for college courses, and
- mentoring and job coaching.

Oregon will pilot these retention and advancement strategies with state employees, and then offer them to private-sector employers and employees. In this way, the agency's first-hand experiences can produce strategies honed through practice that can be of immediate value to employer partners.

## IMPLICATIONS

Oregon hopes to recast AFS as an integral player in the area's new workforce development system—an agency that supports both the unemployed and the employed. If successful, Oregon could set an important national example of how to redefine the role of health and human services agencies in the post-welfare era.


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# WASHINGTON

## THE ECONOMIC AND LABOR MARKET CONTEXT

For the past several years, Washington's economic growth has outstripped the availability of skilled workers. This problem has been particularly acute in the Seattle area, where the aerospace industry is experiencing a serious shortage of skilled workers. Demand for workers in entry-level skilled positions has driven starting salaries to a level of $9 to $14 an hour. The Washington Aerospace Alliance, a collaborative effort involving 150 regional aerospace industry employers, is working to overcome these shortages.

Economic opportunity is also evident in other regions of Washington, but wages are lower. For example, Walla Walla, a small city in southeast Washington, benefits from job opportunities in the region's wine industry, as well as in food processing, manufacturing and the medical field. But although employment is available, demand is greatest in lower-wage jobs, many of which are seasonal or temporary.

## THE INITIATIVE: LABOR FORCE ADVANCEMENT THROUGH TRAINING, EDUCATION AND RETENTION SERVICES

Washington's initiative involves a partnership between Shoreline and Walla Walla Community Colleges, the Washington Department of Social and Health Services, the Employment Security Department, and two major industry associations—the Washington Aerospace Alliance and the Washington Precision Metal Fabricators Association.

Initiative goals are (1) to build a prototype program that engages trainees in lifelong learning, skill upgrading, and career development activities, which can be reproduced in other training areas and industries; (2) to provide a basis for rethinking the funding formula for colleges to offer training for welfare recipients and the working poor; and (3) to determine state and local policy and program changes needed to replicate career mobility programs across the state.

**Participants:**

In the Seattle area, economically disadvantaged individuals will be recruited for training to prepare them for entry-level, higher-wage positions with career potential. A special effort will be made to recruit females and ethnic minorities that have historically been under represented in the aerospace industry.

In Walla Walla, seasonal workers and single mothers, most of whom are Hispanic and low income, will be targeted for participation in the initiative.

**Sectors:**

Washington's Seattle-area strategy focuses primarily on the aerospace industry. Aerospace manufacturers in the region

need computerized numerical control (CNC) operators and CNC metal fabricators. Within a year after job placement, CNC workers will have the potential to earn up to $20 an hour with competitive benefits. As a result, there is a great opportunity to place trained low-income individuals in available jobs with significant potential for career and wage progression. Shoreline will also provide short-term training for Genie Industries, a maker of construction lift equipment. Graduates will be placed in assembly jobs earning up to $11.50 an hour with benefits and can continue training for higher paying supervisory positions.

In its southeastern counterpart, Walla Walla's strategy will focus on several sectors, including trades, corrections, health care, information technology and farm equipment repair. While the primary goal will be to prepare individuals for local and regional employment, Walla Walla also has the capability to train participants and connect them to manufacturing jobs outside of the region, when appropriate.

Services:

Participants at Shoreline and Walla Walla Community Colleges will develop individualized training plans that include short- and long-term goals, financial aid resources, a work-based learning experience, job search strategies and a timeline for all scheduled activities. Job placement services will be available at each college's Job Service Center. Postplacement and retention support will also be available, including opportunities for continuing education and training for advancement beyond the initial placement.

Using industry-based skills standards, counseling, case management and flexible scheduling options, Walla Walla Community College will combine entry-level technical training with job readiness and basic skills and language development, as needed. Shoreline Community College will pilot case management and support services for entry-level workers and the working poor who want to advance their careers in manufacturing industries. Shoreline will also work with industry to develop skills-based curricula and instruction, and will create short-term training courses accessible to working students.

## IMPLICATIONS

Through a strong collaboration with the Washington Aerospace Alliance, the initiative has the potential to replenish declining labor pools, preserve the region's role as a dominant aircraft producer and help hundreds of low-income workers attain greater economic stability. It also has the potential to help unemployed, and underemployed individuals in rural areas access higher-paying jobs in other parts of the state. In addition, the initiative will lay the foundation for community colleges statewide to expand provision and funding of preemployment training and retention services for low-income workers.


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Public/Private Ventures is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the effectiveness of social policies, programs and community initiatives, especially as they affect youth and young adults. In carrying out this mission, P/PV works with philanthropies, the public and business sectors, and nonprofit organizations.

We do our work in four basic ways:

- *We develop or identify social policies, strategies and practices that promote individual economic success and citizenship, and stronger families and communities.*
- *We assess the effectiveness of these promising approaches and distill their critical elements and benchmarks, using rigorous field study and research methods.*
- *We mine evaluation results and implementation experiences for their policy and practice implications, and communicate the findings to public and private decision-makers, and to community leaders.*
- *We create and field test the building blocks—model policies, financing approaches, curricula and training materials, communication strategies and learning processes—that are necessary to implement effective approaches more broadly. We then work with leaders of the various sectors to implement these expansion tools, and to improve their usefulness.*

P/PV's staff is composed of policy leaders in various fields; evaluators and researchers in disciplines ranging from economics to ethnography; and experienced practitioners from the nonprofit, public, business and philanthropic sectors.

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